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A

SUMMARY VIEW
OF THE
SLAVE TRADE,
AND OF THE
PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES
OF ITS
ABOLITION.

L O N D O N:

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SOCIETY instituted in 1787, for the Purpose of effecting
the ABOLITION of the SLAVE TRADE.

ENCOURAGED by the success which has attended the publication of sundry Tracts against Slavery, this Society was formed in order to excite still more the public attention to the *Slave Trade*, and to collect such evidence or information as may tend to its discouragement, and, finally, to its abolition.

For these purposes (which have been already attended with, and cannot be effected without, considerable expense) a Subscription has been opened, and a Committee, whose names are annexed, appointed to manage the funds.

The principal aim of the Society is to promote, among the Members of both Houses of Parliament, a disposition to inquire into this inhuman traffic; and they have the satisfaction already to number, amongst the friends of the cause, several men of distinguished character and abilities, who enter into the business with a zeal, which affords a reasonable ground to hope for the accomplishment of the design.

They have also the peculiar pleasure of seeing men of different religious denominations unite, with true Christian harmony, in the cause of humanity and justice.

This Tract is intended to give a Summary View of the Slave Trade, and is meant to be generally distributed amongst those, whose exertions or subscriptions may be expected.

If this trade should become, as there is reason to hope it will, a subject of Parliamentary investigation early in this session, it is to be wished that the general sense of the Nation (which without doubt is in favour of liberty, justice, and humanity) may be expressed by Petitions to Parliament, and by applications to their Representatives, in order to procure their assistance. In the distribution of the Tracts, it is therefore recommended that this purpose may be kept in view.

The Society will thankfully receive any Communications on this Subject, addressed to the Chairman at their Office, No 18, in the Old Jewry; or to the Treas-

NAMES of the Committee appointed for procuring Information and Evidence, and for directing the Application of such Monies as are already, or may be hereafter collected for the Purposes of this Institution.

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N. B. The Subscriptions of such as are disposed to contribute towards carrying on the design of this Society, will be received by the Treasurer, or by any Member of the Committee; or by Sir Herbert Mackworth, Baronet; Dorset, Johnson, and Wilkinson, Bankers, No. 68, New Bond Street.

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I. *Slaves are acquired by Means of War.*

OBSERVATION. THESE wars are, for the most part, entered into by the parties concerned, without any previous injury on either side, and for no other motive, than to furnish slaves for the Europeans, by whom they have been supplied with arms and ammunition,

nition, and frequently bribed, for the purpose. During some of these wars, the victors have been so incensed at the resistance they have found, that their spirit of vengeance has entirely prevailed over their avarice, and, though they have engaged in the conflict for the express purpose of procuring slaves, they have been known to murder every individual, without discrimination either of age or sex.

II. *Slaves are acquired in Consequence of Crimes.*

OBSERVATION.—Before the slave-trade commenced, criminals were punished in Africa, much in the same manner as those among other nations in the same stage of society; but since the introduction of this trade, *all* crimes have been punished with slavery. Every artifice has been used by the prince to entice the subject to become a criminal. Acts, formerly esteemed innocent, have been deemed crimes, for the sake of inflicting the punishment. New distinctions have also been made in crimes, that additional punishments might succeed. The offender, in one instance, forfeits his own freedom; in a second,

cond, that of the male part of his family, together with his own: in a third, the whole family suffer; and, in a fourth, the relations of the offender as far as they can be traced. And thus many thousands of innocent persons have been consigned to slavery.

III. *Slaves are acquired by Virtue of the Right of Empire in the Prince.*

OBSERVATION.—The prince considers his villages, as so many parks or reservoirs, stocked for his own luxury and use. When the black-broker tempts him with his merchandize, and crimes and war have not furnished him with a number adequate to the demand, he seizes certain villagers, who are put into chains, and led, whole families together, to the ships.

This is particularly the case with the King of Dahomy, who rules his subjects with such despotic sway, as to apprehend no resistance, on their part, to his measures.

However, in other parts of the country, the mode of seizing them is a little varied. The

king goes with his guards to one of his villages in the night ; he surrounds it, and sets it on fire ; the poor villagers, flying in consternation from the flames, fall into the hands of their tyrant. This mode, therefore, differs from the former in this respect only, that many are terribly burnt on the occasion, and others perish.

IV. *Slaves are acquired by Kidnapping.*

OBSERVATION.—Slave-hunters, consisting of the natives, are employed in the inland country to kidnap the unwary. They lie in wait frequently in the rice-fields, to carry off all such as may be stationed there for the purpose of driving the birds from the grain. They lie in wait also at the springs of water, to which the natives resort to quench their thirst, and in thickets by the sides of creeks, to fall upon those solitary beings, who fish there either for amusement or for food : but their principal station is in the long grass, by the side of particular pathways, which are cut from one village to another, from which they spring out upon their prey, and secure it.

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But the natives are not the only people concerned in these iniquitous practices. The British traders have enticed the natives to the shore for the purposes of trade; they have tempted them there with biscuits, with brandy, and other spirits; and, having made them intoxicated, they have forced them on board, and sailed off with them to the Colonies.

These are the various methods by which slaves have been usually obtained; and so successful have these practices been, that *many millions* of people, since the introduction of the trade, have been actually put on board European ships, and consigned to slavery.

Many of the slaves, acquired by these methods, have been brought 1200 miles from the inland country, and have been obliged to pass through inhospitable woods and deserts, where *thousands* of them have died through fatigue and thirst.

The annual exportation from Africa, consists of about *one hundred thousand* people. Of these, more than 20,000 die on their voyage, from close confinement and other causes, and at least that number in the seasoning; so that if to these we
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add the number that die in the different wars, and those that perish in the long and fatiguing march before-described, it will appear that about *an hundred thousand* are *annually* murdered, even before the planter can say he has any additional stock for his plantation.

Of those that survive the voyage and seasoning, it may be said, that being subjected in many instances to the most cruel and despotic treatment, they perish in a few years; and scarcely a vestige is to be found, that an hundredth part of this immense body of people, annually enslaved upon the coast, had *ever been in existence*.

The author, from whom these observations are mostly taken, and whose* book treats of the *injustice* and *inhumanity* of the slave-trade, is now preparing a sequel to the said work, comprehending

* An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, particularly the African, translated from a Latin Dissertation, which was honoured with the first prize in the university of Cambridge, for the year 1785, with additions. By T. Clarkson.

the *impolicy* of it, and the consequences that are likely to arise from its *abolition*.

The work is divided into two parts.

P A R T I.

I. Africa has two sorts of commodities to offer, viz. the *productions of its soil* and *negro-slaves*.

As it is impossible that we can trade successfully in both of them at the same time, (one of them having hitherto proved an insuperable impediment to the other) the question is, in which of the two it is most *politic* to deal.

The one is replete with misery and destruction to the human race, and is beneficial but to a *few individuals*; whereas the other, consisting of cotton, indigo, tobacco, rice, coffee, spices, drugs, mahogany, dying woods, wax, ambergris, honey, ivory, gold, &c. would be of *national* advantage, as it would amply repay us for the loss of America, break the monopoly of the Dutch, be the cheapest market for raw materials for our manufacturers, open a new and extensive market for
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our manufactures, improve the revenue, and be attended with other public benefits.

II. The negroe-trade, as has been observed before, is profitable but to a few; it is ruinous to some, and it is hazardous at the best: none of which circumstances would be peculiar to the other trade.

III. The negroe-trade is bad, in one point of view, both for the merchant and manufacturer. The former receives for his slaves bills at eighteen, twenty-four, and sometimes thirty-six months after sight. The credit, which the latter is obliged to give, is eighteen months. Whereas the merchant and manufacturer in the trade alluded to, would receive their returns twice, if not three times, within the year.

IV. The negroe trade destroys, from the very *nature of it*, near 2000 seamen annually. The loss of these is of the utmost importance to a people, whose welfare, nay, whose existence, in the present political situation of Europe, as a commercial nation, depends upon their naval strength and importance. This loss can never be compensated

compensated by any emoluments, which individuals may obtain in the trade. Whereas the trade al-
luded to, even if the *same ships* and *men* were em-
ployed, would not dissipate them as at present,
but become a *nursery* instead of being a *grave*.

V. The negroe trade (i. e.) a branch of it, by enabling the French to clear and cultivate new land in St. Domingo (which they are unable to do to the extent of their wishes, without our assistance) is replete with the most pernicious consequences to the British nation.

This island, if fully cultivated, can produce more sugar than all our islands together. Every lot of slaves, which we import there, enables them to clear an additional acre. Every acre so gained supplies additional produce. This produce employs additional ships to old France. Nor does the evil stop here. A new fleet of ships is raised for them in exporting this produce to other countries. Now, if we consider that French ships carry double the number of men that ours of the same burthen do, we shall find that we are enabling our enemies, by this branch of the trade, to dispute with us the sovereignty of the seas.

P A R T II.

The first section contains an account of *seven* plantations, which have wanted *no* supplies for some years. But it must be observed, that on these plantations the negroes were treated with humanity, and population was encouraged. Indeed on one of them, where the treatment was superior to that of the rest, the numbers increased so much, that the plantation was overstocked.

The author shews, from these instances, that if a planter treats his slaves well, and encourages population, they *must* increase. But that, if the same plantation falls into the hands of an avaricious and unfeeling man, it must go back in a few years, and require supplies.

He then states, that if the slave trade is abolished, the planters will be obliged to treat their slaves with humanity, and encourage population; and, of course, that the islands can never be in want of cultivators.

He then goes into the various causes of the diminution of slaves in the colonies; and shews, that all these causes will be removed if the slave-trade is abolished.

One of them is this ; When a slave ship arrives in the colonies, her cargo invariably consists of two thirds male, and the remainder female. This is but a bad proportion of the sexes for propagation. But when they are put up to sale, an avaricious planter, who can give a better price than his neighbour, and who will not suffer the pregnancy of women to stop the work of his plantation, buys them in a still greater disproportion, viz. in that of five to one ; his views being chiefly confined to the males. The females fall mostly to the lot of the indigent and involved, who cannot favour them. Hence a separation of the sexes ; otherwise it would never happen that so many thousands of both sexes, annually imported into the colonies, should pass away, in a little time, and scarcely leave a seed behind them.

Now (says the author) if the importations are stopped, and sufficient previous notice is given of the event, the avaricious planter, who formerly purchased males alone, will *be obliged* at the next sales to purchase females ; while those on the other hand, who have the greatest proportion of females, will in their turn purchase males.

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He then shews, that much more work will be done in the same time ; that the planters will be richer and happier ; that the islands will be free from the insurrections, with which they are now continually harrassed ; that the numerous suicides which happen, all of which are a considerable loss to the planter, will be prevented ; that the waste lands in the colonies to a prodigious extent, will be cleared and cultivated ; that the revenue will, of course, be greatly improved ; and that a foundation will be laid for a general emancipation at last, and for a conversion to christianity. Which, if they take place, will not only be of considerable advantage to the slaves themselves, but to the planters ; as their estates (so much is the balance in favour of free labour) will be doubly valuable.

To these considerations he adds, that if the plan of the abolition of the slave trade takes place with the English alone, *many thousand lives will be annually saved.*

